



**Drugs and Narcotics Agency
State of Georgia**

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September 5, 2003

John L. Eadie
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78 Van Dyke Drive South
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Dear John:

In regards to our conversation earlier this week, this letter concerns this agency (GDNA) and its desire to establish an electronic Prescription Monitoring Program.

Over the past 15 to 20 years we have studied implementing some type of prescription monitoring system. Originally the cost and difficulty of maintaining a triplicate prescription program prevented starting such a program. Georgia has 6 pharmacists who serve in the General Assembly. These representatives and senators have always balked at the cost of such a program, as well as expressed distaste at the amount of time it would each pharmacist to participate in a triplicate program.

When Oklahoma began the electronic prescription monitoring program, we thought a similar program would work in Georgia. We paid a visit to their program director and brought home the information needed to start up and maintain such an operation. However when we presented the program to the powers that be, it was noticed the primary focus of the monitoring tended to be towards schedule II controlled substances, and Georgia did not have very much, if any, problems with schedule II drugs at that time. It was felt the funding to begin a monitoring program could not be justified.

However, since the onslaught of the Oxycontin abuse problems over the past 4 years, our priorities have changed. We have a very serious problem in this state with Oxycontin addiction and abuse. Pain Clinic "Doc in the Box" operations have popped up throughout the state almost overnight. There have been numerous deaths and several suicides of people addicted to Oxycontin. Some of these victims have been well educated, members of prominent families. They became addicted to Oxycontin, believed there was no other way out, and they killed themselves, leaving letters explaining why they had done what they had done.

September 5, 2003

Page 2

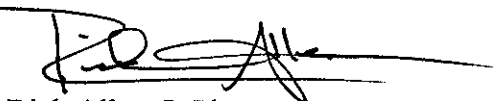
Even a relative of a high ranking, elected state official became addicted to Oxycontin. I was personally sent to investigate this case and determine where the person was obtaining their drugs. When the state official asked what could be done to help alleviate the Oxycontin problem, we explained what an electronic monitoring program could accomplish. He expressed sincere interest in helping us to obtain funding to start such a program in Georgia.

However since that time, the state has had serious budget problems, and there has been no extra money to allocate for any type of new programs. After we learned of Purdue Pharma settling a lawsuit with the State of Florida by agreed to provide \$2 million dollars to start a PMP, we talked with a local Purdue Rep about their funding a similar program in Georgia. We were met with indifference and a total lack of response and acknowledgment of the Florida settlement. I personally felt we were being given a brush off by the Rep, because he did not have any desire to even discuss what had happened in Florida.

In response to your question. Yes, Georgia would be very much in favor of establishing an electronic prescription monitoring system, but we currently do not have any glimmer of possible funding from our legislature. It would be extremely helpful if any funds could be made available to enable this state to start up such a program.

If you have any questions in regards to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email is allenr@gdna.ga.gov, and our toll-free telephone number is 800-656-6568. Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Allen", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rick Allen, R.Ph.
Deputy Director